

Appl. No. : 10/509,551

Amdt. Dated: January 11, 2007

Reply to Office Action of September 12, 2006

After the claims, please add the following as a separate page:

Abstract of the Disclosure

An apparatus for collecting particulate material has a collection tray 1 and a fire-resistant collection reservoir 21, 22, 23. A scraper blade 24 is attached to a carriage 7 which is arranged to be driven by an electrical motor along the base of the tray 1 so as to sweep particulate material into the reservoir 21, 22, 23. A pivotal lid normally closes an opening into the reservoir 21, 22, 23 until the scraper blade is ready to sweep particulate material into the reservoir, whereupon the lid is opened to receive the swept particulate material. Actuation of the lid for the reservoir may be operated by electro-mechanical switches or by a solenoid 60.

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To the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for collecting particulate material comprising a collection tray, a fire resistant collection reservoir ~~associated with~~ located beneath one end of said collection tray, and moving means for reciprocating movement with respect to the collection tray and the fire resistant collection reservoir for moving particulate material from said collection tray into said fire resistant collection reservoir.
2. (Currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said reservoir is a container having a selectably operable lid openable for receiving the particulate material into the fire resistant collection reservoir and closable to ensure the collection reservoir is fire resistant.
3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said reservoir includes a removable collection unit.
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said moving means include a motor driven scraper carriage unit which includes scraper blade means arranged to reciprocatingly move the particulate material from an inside base portion of said tray and into said reservoir.
6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein when said scraper blade means is positioned above said reservoir, means are provided for opening said reservoir lid so that the particulate material moved by said scraper blade is deposited into said reservoir.
7. (Currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein the means for opening said reservoir lid includes [[a]] said lid being pivotal [[lid]] and having an abutment member arranged to be contacted by a member attached to said scraper carriage unit for causing said lid to pivotally open.
8. (Currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein the means for opening said reservoir lid includes [[a]] said lid being pivotal [[lid]] and arranged to be pivottally opened and closed by ~~electro-magnetic~~ means activatable by scraper carriage unit position detecting means.

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9. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein said electro-magnetic means is an electrical solenoid coupled with said lid.

10. (Previously presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein there is provided detector means to determine the open and closed states of the lid and control means for controlling motion of said moving means whereby, if said lid fails to open or close, movement of said moving means is terminated.

11. (Currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein when said scraper blade means is above said reservoir and said lid is open, means are provided for cleaning the scraper blade means, whereby the particulate material and dirt therefrom is deposited into said reservoir.

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein when said scraper blade means reciprocatingly re-traverses along said tray away from said reservoir, means are provided for closing said reservoir lid and for lifting said scraper blade means away from said inside base portion of said tray so that the particulate material is not moved in a direction away from said reservoir.

13. (Currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein when said scraper blade means is arranged to reciprocatingly move the particulate material toward and into said reservoir, means are provided for ensuring rigidity of said scraper blade means.

14. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein said means are provided for maintaining said scraper blade means orthogonally to the inside base portion of said tray.

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein means are provided for limiting the range of motion of said moving means in a direction of said reciprocating motion.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein timer means is provided such that said moving means is controllable by said timer means to effect reciprocation of said moving means.

[[19.]]17. (Currently amended) A method of collecting particulate material including the steps of:

a) providing a collection tray into which said particulate material is deposited,

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b) ~~arranging a fire-resistant collection reservoir to be associated with~~ beneath one end of said collection tray, and

c) ~~said first resistant collection reservoir having a lid, including the steps of providing means for reciprocatingly moving means with respect to the collection tray and the collection reservoir to move said particulate material from the collection tray into toward said fire-resistant collection reservoir; opening the lid of said reservoir and depositing said particulate into said reservoir.~~

[[20.]]18. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 19 and further including the steps of lifting said moving means, moving said moving means away from said reservoir and closing said lid.

19. (New) A method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising the steps of providing the collection reservoir with a lid; opening the lid of said reservoir and depositing said particulate into said reservoir.

20. (New) An apparatus for collecting particulate material comprising a collection tray, a fire-resistant collection reservoir associated with said collection tray, and means for moving particulate material from said collection tray into said fire-resistant collection reservoir, wherein said moving means include a motor driven scraper carriage unit which includes scraper blade means arranged reciprocatingly to move the particulate material from an inside base portion of said tray and into said reservoir and wherein means are provided for opening said reservoir lid when said scraper blade means is positioned above said reservoir, so that the particulate material moved by said scraper blade is deposited into said reservoir.

21. (New) A method of collecting particulate material including the steps of:

- a) providing a collection tray into which said particulate material is deposited,
- b) arranging a fire-resistant collection reservoir to be associated with said collection tray, said fire-resistant collection reservoir having a lid,
- c) moving said particulate material toward said fire-resistant collection reservoir,
- d) opening the lid of said reservoir;

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- e) depositing said particulate material into said reservoir;
- e) lifting said moving means;
- f) moving said moving means away from said reservoir; and
- g) closing said lid.